

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claims 49-62 are active in the present application. Claims 1-48 have been canceled. Claims 49-68 are new claims. Support for new independent Claim 49 is found in original Claims 18 and 21. Support for new Claim 50 is found in original Claim 22. Support for new Claim 51 is found in original Claim 23. Support for new Claim 52 is found in original Claim 25. Support for new Claim 53 is found in original Claim 26. Support for new Claim 54 is found in original Claim 27. Support for new Claim 55 is found in original Claim 28. Support for new independent Claim 56 is found in original Claim 29. Support for new independent Claim 57 is found in original Claim 30. Support for new Claim 58 is found in original Claim 31. Support for new Claim 59 is found in original Claim 32. Support for new Claim 60 is found in previously presented Claim 43. Support for new Claim 61 is found in previously presented Claim 44. Support for new Claim 62 is found in previously presented Claim 45. No new matter is believed to have been added by this amendment.

REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION

New independent Claim 49 contains some of the limitations of previous Claims 18 and 21. New Claim 49 is drawn to a back-molded plastic that comprises a polymer back-molding film present on a back-molded fiber reinforced plastic. The back-molding film of present Claim 49 is a composite laminated film that includes (i) a substrate layer comprising an ASA or ASA/PC molding composition, and (iii) a transparent top layer comprising at least one styrene acrylonitrile (i.e., SAN) copolymer. A further condition of present Claim 49 is the requirement that the length of the fibers in the plastic molding is at least partly greater than 1 mm.

The Office rejected previous independent Claim 18 as obvious in view of a combination of BASF and Sakai. Applicants submit that the BASF prior art reference may disclose a laminated sheet or film that include a substrate layer and a transparent top layer. The transparent top layer of BASF must be a PMMA-containing layer. A further preference of the BASF teachings is a substrate layer that contains ABS, polycarbonate or polybutylene terephthalate (page 22, lines 14-18 of BASF). BASF further discloses a preference for glass fibers having a length of from 6 to 10 μm .

Thus, several differences are evident between the presently claimed invention and the multi-layer structure of the BASF reference. For example, the laminated sheet or film described in BASF has a top layer that must be made of PMMA whereas the top layer of the presently claimed molding contains SAN (a styrene acrylonitrile copolymer). Further differences include a difference in fiber length. The BASF patent discloses a maximum fiber length of 10 μm (i.e., 1-10 μm) and a preferable fiber length of 3-6 μm . This is different from the presently claimed invention which requires a fiber length of greater than 1 mm.

Applicants submit that BASF does not teach a back-molded plastic molding such as that of present Claim 49. On pages 31 and 32 BASF teaches a series of advantages that may

be achieved in the prior art layer structure. Applicants submit that the advantages of the prior art composition disclosed on page 31 of BASF may direct those of ordinary skill in the art to a layer structure having PMMA top layer in order to achieve the advantages disclosed in BASF. Applicants further submit that the disclosure of the BASF PMMA top layer would not direct those of skill in the art to an SAN-containing top layer because BASF discloses that the advantages of the prior art layer structure stem from the presence of the PMMA.

The Office combined Sakai with BASF. Applicants submit that Sakai does not disclose a fiber-reinforced plastic that is back-molded onto a polymer back-molding film. In fact, Applicants submit that Sakai does not disclose structures having different layers made from different materials. Sakai does not cure the defects of BASF and therefore cannot render the presently claimed invention obvious in combination with BASF.

As already stated above, new independent Claim 49 requires that that claimed back-molded plastic molding has a transparent top layer that comprises at least one styrene-acrylonitrile copolymer. In contrast, BASF discloses that the prior art top layer (i.e., layer (3)) "is a top layer of PMMA" (page 24, lines 12-13). BASF does not suggest a back-molded plastic molding having as a top layer any layer that comprises at least one styrene-acrylonitrile copolymer.

Applicants submit that those of ordinary skill in the art may not have foreseen the presently claimed invention in view of the disclosure in BASF that the top layer must be a PMMA layer, especially in view of the advantages associated with the presence of a PMMA top layer (e.g., disclosed on page 31, lines 14-30 of BASF). Because BASF discloses only embodiments wherein the top layer is a PMMA, Applicants submit that those of ordinary skill in the art may not have any motivation to substitute PMMA with a material such as the styrene acrylonitrile resin copolymer that is required to be present in the top layer of the presently claimed invention.

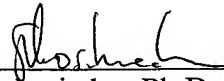
Applicants submit that the presently claimed invention is not obvious in view of the prior art relied upon by the Office and respectfully request the withdrawal of the rejections and the allowance of all now-pending claims.

Respectfully submitted,

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